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C O N F I D E N T I A L UNVIE VIENNA 000647

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [ENGR](#) [KNNP](#) [IAEA](#) [RS](#) [IR](#)
SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NUCLEAR ENERGY IN IRAN

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Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES GEOFFREY R. PYATT FOR REASONS 1.4 (B)
AND (D)

Summary

¶1. (C) Per an IAEA readout, the recent two-day nuclear power conference displayed negligible international involvement in Iran's nuclear sector (apart from Russia) and cannot have failed to reflect to the Iranian government the limitations on its relations with the Agency. IAEA official Christer Viktorsson said he kept closely to his IAEA-cleared script, focusing on reactor safety, but was nonetheless later misquoted by Iranian press. He said the IAEA was contacting the Iranian press outlet to set the record straight. Speaking with Msnoffs December 5, his last day as an IAEA employee, Viktorsson said there had been approximately 300 participants in the Tehran conference, mostly Iranians and Russians. On a related matter, he confirmed that the Norwegian training program for Iran has been launched and that IAEA will perform two safety-related missions to Iran in the second half of 2009, one of which normally takes place 3-6 months before a nuclear power plant goes operational. End summary.

Tehran Conference on Nuclear Power Plants

¶2. (C) On December 5, 2008, Christer Viktorsson of IAEA met with Msnoffs to discuss the November 30, 2008 conference "First International Conference on Nuclear Power Plants, Environmental and Sustainable Development" that he attended. According to Viktorsson, the conference was mainly attended by representatives of Iran and Russia, although he knew that at least one representative from Oman had attended. Viktorsson said there were several political speeches during the first morning of the conference, including presentations by Dr. A. Fayazbakhsh, Professor Abbapour (the organizers of the conference), and Speaker of the Majlis Ali Larijani. Thereafter, the rest of the conference presentations and discussions were technical in nature. Viktorsson stated that his presentations centered on safety and the benefits of Iran joining the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

¶3. (C) During the conference Iranian officials discussed their Nuclear Development Plan, in which they aim to have 20,000 MeW power by the year 2025. This would be accomplished through importation of technology, as well as development of their own reactor design/technology. In the latter regard, the Iranians stated that they plan to design/build their own 360 MW reactor and, with that experience, to follow with larger plants. Viktorsson also noted that Russia, which he said was heavily marketing its nuclear wares at the Conference, stated that it had plans to

build 26 new reactors in Russia and 10-12 new reactors outside of Russia.

¶4. (C) Viktorsson said that at the end of the conference Iranian officials suggested IAEA develop a regional nuclear cooperation program for Iran and its neighbors similar to the program IAEA organized for Asian countries (Asian Nuclear Safety Network). Viktorsson did not know if that was something that IAEA was planning to do.

¶5. (C) Viktorsson offered that he was writing a trip report which he would share with the Mission when it is completed. (Note: Our conversation with him occurred on his last day of IAEA service after many years; Viktorsson is moving on to a position in the UAE's nascent nuclear regulatory structure. End Note).

Misquote

¶6. (C) We raised the topic of press reporting on the conference; Viktorsson said there was a lot of press at the conference, but all of it Iranian. He stated to us that he had spoken to only a few reporters and that the recent article from Iran's FNA about Bushehr (claiming, inter alia, that Viktorsson said that "operation of the plant will be carried out safely") had misquoted him. The IAEA is preparing a response to the article that should be released soon, he said. The Mission will try to obtain a copy.

IAEA Missions to Iran

¶7. (C) Viktorsson re-confirmed to us that Iran has requested from the IAEA an Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) and an International Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission. A pre-IRRS meeting took place in November 2008 and a full IRRS is scheduled for October 2009. IAEA is currently trying to recruit team members for this mission. The pre-OSART is scheduled for some time in the second half of ¶2009.

Norway Funding Training Program

¶8. (C) In addition to the conference, Viktorsson was also in Iran to launch the new safety training program for the Iranian regulators that has been championed by Norway. He indicated the meeting went well and the program has now officially started. He thanked the U.S. for its support and for its encouragement for other countries to support the program. He stated that Finland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Slovakia had all agreed to participate with Norway in the program. (Note: Mission reps re-confirmed that IAEA had spoken with Finland in an official capacity about participating in the program and had received an official positive response. End Note). Viktorsson also indicated that the Czech Republic has recently expressed some interest in participating, even though its first reaction was negative. Viktorsson implied that this was because of the U.S. support.

¶9. (C) As the next step in the training program, IAEA staff and representatives from DMV (the Norwegian firm providing the core of the training) will visit the regulatory bodies in the four countries mentioned above, probably in January 2009. The consultations will focus on the training program and what services and instruction for Iranians the IAEA expects from the participating regulators.

Suitably Restrained

¶10. (C) Comment: After our informal and formal demarches at several levels of the IAEA, and aware no doubt of our

approaches in capitals, the Agency handled this Iranian event appropriately. When we brought to IAEA attention the organizers' unauthorized use of the IAEA logo on the conference website, EXPO chief Cserveny called the Iranian ambassador to get it removed. With two deputy directors general invited by Tehran, ElBaradei on reflection authorized only one speaker, a departing expert on reactor safety, to deliver a technical paper in conjunction with conducting other Agency business. The level and character of the IAEA's participation provided Tehran no propaganda triumph; rather, it conveyed that Tehran's relations with the Agency are confined to technical essentials. End Comment.
PYATT